



Advent Evening Vespers II

ADVENT EVENING VESPERS
Wednesday, December 8, 2021

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**Congregational responses are in bold.*

WELCOME

PASTOR LAURIE

GATHERING MUSIC

ANTHONY CABRERA AND CONGREGATION

Anthony:

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel.
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Child of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!*

ALL:

***O come, O Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh.
To us the path of knowledge show, and help us in that way to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!***

ALL:

***O come, O come, O Adonai, who came to all on Sinai high,
and from its peak a single law proclaimed in majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!***

ALL:

***O come, O Day-Spring, come and cheer our spirits by your advent here;
Love stir with-in the womb of night, and death's own shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.***

Anthony:

*O come, Desire of Nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind.
Make envy, strife and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!*

'All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.'

(John 1:3-5)

In the beginning, Lord
I was alone
Like the earth
before your Spirit moved over the waters.
I was formless and empty
and darkness filled the depths of my heart.
Then, it was as if you declared
'Let there be Light'
and out of the darkness
I began to see hope
like a shimmering ray of love
breaking through the parting clouds
at the conclusion of the night.

In the beginning, Lord I was alone
but when I saw you in the light I was no longer afraid.
You held out your hand
and though I had a choice
I had no choice
because to refuse
was to embrace again the darkness.
In the beginning, Lord I was alone
now I am again a part
of your creation
loved, wanted, needed, family.
In the light of your presence
I hold out my heart that others
might glimpse through it your reflection
and be drawn from the darkness that I once embraced
into the light of your sunrise
the brightness of your face.

Jesus, Lover of mercy, a witness for peace
Be the center of all that we are, and the life that we lead.

Jesus, light in this dark world, illuminate our hearts and minds
Be the center of all that we are, and the life that we lead.

Within Our Darkest Nights
We will sing it through several times

Within our darkest night,
you kindle the fire that never dies away, never dies away.
Within our darkest night,
you kindle the fire that never dies away, never dies away.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE: PEACE**PASTOR LAURIE AND CONGREGATION**

Isaiah 11 describes the Kingdom of God as a place of peace where hatred, anger, and violence are not just tucked under the rug, but swept away all together.

In today's terms, that scripture *could* sound like this:

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
Israel and Palestine will tear down their wall.
The leopard shall lie down with the kid,
Black lives and poor lives will matter to all.
The calf and the lion will feed together,
those who are different from one another;
families who are estranged;
and friends who have broken covenant
will work together in harmony,
and a little child shall lead them.

This evening we light the candle of peace as a prayer, a protest, and a reminder of God's prayer for this world. We light the candle of peace to symbolize God's ever-increasing light.

And as this light burns and grows, we will wait, eagerly, longing for the birth of a child and for the peace only love can bring. May peace light up the world.

"In him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

QUIET PRAYER

As we light the candle of peace, let us quietly pray for peace in our hearts, our community, our nation, and our world

The song leader will sing it through once; the congregation is then invited to sing it twice.

Shine on us, O God of jus - tice;
 Guide our path through gloom of
 night; Bear with - in us
 Wis - dom's glo - ry; Come to us, O
 Christ the Light!

SCRIPTURE READING**PASTOR LAURIE**

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world'

(John 1:6-9)

REFLECTION**PASTOR LAURIE AND CONGREGATION**

In the lonely places
 The wilderness
 Where we stand forlorn
 Windswept and alone
 Your voice calls out
Prepare a way for the Lord

In the dark places
 The shadows
 Where we hide our fears
 Embrace our tears
 Your voice calls out
Prepare a way for the Lord

For the desert places in which we walk
The streets we roam
The paths we cross
Guide our feet
Take us to places
Where you would go
Give us words that you would use
That in this Advent season
Of promise and preparation
We might point the way with John the Baptist
To the true light, which enlightens the world!

O come, Thou Day-spring, from on high,
And cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come again and with us ever dwell.

QUIET MEDITATION

At this time, you may like to read and reflect on the words that have been read, gaze at the candle - or simply enjoy the peace and calm.

GOSPEL LESSON

PASTOR LAURIE

‘As it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

(Luke 3:4-6)

Friends, listen. God is still speaking.

Thanks be to God!

SUNG RESPONSE

ANTHONY

Isaiah's Dream

God of Inspiration, circle us.
Circle us with the light of your presence, bright within this dark world
Enable us to be overcomers of fear and temptation
Enable us to be victors over evil and despair
Enable us to become that which you would desire

(Quiet prayer)

God of hope, God of peace
Circle us with the light of your presence.

Circle our family within the shelter of your outstretched arms
Protect them in each moment of their daily lives
Protect them in the decisions that they face
Protect their homes and relationships

(Quiet prayer)

God of hope, God of peace
Circle us with the light of your presence.

Circle us, Lord
Circle this nation with Advent love and hope
Create a desire to listen to the Advent message
Create a willingness to understand and respond
Create a need to reach out to the Christ Child

(Quiet prayer)

God of hope, God of peace
Circle us with the light of your presence.

Circle us, Lord
Circle this world with the joy of your love
Where there is sickness and disease bring healing
Where there is hunger and despair bring hope
Where there is torture and oppression bring release

(Quiet prayer)

God of hope, God of peace
Circle us with the light of your presence.

The Lord's Prayer

You may pray in the language and tradition of your choice.

SUNG RESPONSE**ANTHONY AND CONGREGATION**

Come and fill all my life, Come and fill

Dmin G Dmin7 Emin7 F G

all my life. Each and ev - 'ry ten - der place:
Pour - ing gen - tly, rush - ing strong:

Dmin7 Emin7 F G

Ho - ly Breath, move through me.
Ho - ly Breath, move through me.

A CREED OF PEACE**PASTOR LAURIE AND CONGREGATION**

I believe in faiths of compassion, and I nurture benevolent hopes;
 I treasure loves without borders and value simple truths;
 I believe in the peace of One Peace; redeeming, unending, sublime;
 For my peace is always your peace as your peace is always mine;
 Peace makes us One with each other where faiths, hopes and loves combine.

BENEDICTION**PASTOR LAURIE**

Be people of peace. Let peace live in your heart and share the peace of Christ with all you meet. Share peace by acting out of compassion and not fear. Share peace by listening to all sides of the story. Share peace by praying for our world.

In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share peace. As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share peace and hope with those you meet. **Amen.**

FOLLOWING THE BENEDICTION, YOU MAY QUIETLY LEAVE WHEN YOU WISH

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